

Color-Coded Problem Solving

Objective: Provide teams with a tool to problem-solving in a well-rounded way by asking different types of questions more intentionally.

• Level: Introductory

Time: 30 minutes

Audience: Team

• Materials:

- Color-Coded Problem Solving (x1 per participant) downloadable from the next page or on the MyBirkman Action page

The Birkman Colors provide a useful way to approach problem-solving by color-coding the issue at hand. Is the problem at hand a Red, Green, Yellow, or Blue issue? This categorization can help orient teams in the right direction when working through issues and handling new opportunities as well as leverage the strengths of different perspectives by uprooting issues and sparking conversations that represent the priorities of each Color.

Steps:

1. Review the four types of problem-solving questions using the Color-Coded Problem-Solving tip sheet
2. Discuss:
 1. As related to a specific initiative or project the team is working on, have them answer 2-3 questions from each Color group.
 2. Afterwards, ask them to reflect on the discussion.
 - When reflecting on their Usual Behavior and Interests on the Birkman Map, are there any blindspots the team needs to be aware given how they naturally focus their energy?
 - What types of questions would your team benefit from asking more often?
 - How can your team ensure all four types of problem-solving approaches are being represented in your conversations?



TIP SHEET

Color-Coded Problem Solving

The Birkman Colors provide a useful way to approach problem-solving by color coding the issue at hand. Is the problem at hand a Red, Green, Yellow, or Blue issue? This categorization can help you orient your team in the right direction when solving problems and handling new opportunities. The questions below can serve as helpful references as you continue to strengthen your team's problem-solving skills.

WHAT?

Red problem-solving questions:

- What are our concrete goals?
- What actions do we need to take?
- What is the logical next step?
- What challenges or roadblocks do we need to resolve?
- What decisions need to be made?

WHO?

Green problem-solving questions:

- Who will be impacted (internal and external)?
- Who are the key stakeholders?
- Who is leading everyone through the change?
- Who is handling communications?

HOW?

Yellow problem-solving questions:

- How will resources allocated?
- How will risks be managed?
- How will adjustments be made to address changes?
- How will progress be measured and sustained?

WHY?

Blue problem-solving questions:

- What are our long-term goals?
- What ideas do we need to consider?
- What is our next big opportunity?
- What possibilities do we need to explore?
- What decisions or approaches need to be re-evaluated?